

An Arthur Ford Anthology  
Writings by and about America's Sensitive of the Century  
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*Chapter 9 – Ford's Thought & Advice Spawns Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship & the  
Academy of Religion & Psychical Research*

*Ford's Thought and Advice Led to the Creation of SFF's Academic Affiliate, The  
Academy of Religion & Psychical Research*

Excerpt – Page 95 & 96

On numerous occasions in the five years before his death, Ford was consulted by various leaders of SFF over the dilemma of the disinterest in academic for our organization and its interests.

Specifically, it was observed that while the clergy of many Christian denominations were active in this Fellowship the theologians and professors of religion in seminaries and colleges evinced little or no interest in such concerns. Similarly, numerous psychical researchers and a few parapsychologists were members of the Fellowship, but no mainline scientists or university professors of science were at all interested in the consciousness, mental and psychological factors involved in spirituality, or in the obvious interface between religion and psychical research.

On this concern, Dr. J. Schoneberg Setzer, a professor of religion, became a real activist, and consulted often with Ford, and with the SFF field representative, Rev. J. Gordon Melton, with the president, Rev. Canon William V. Rauscher, and with many others, including especially Robert H. Ashby, who became the SFF director of research and education in early 1971, Dr. Louis Richard Batzler, then the SFF chair for colleges and seminaries, and Frank C. Tribbe, a member of the SFF Executive Council.

As a result of SFF Committee and Council actions, on October 27, 1972, the Academy of Religion and Psychical Research was formally created as the SFF academic affiliate to bridge this gap between the Fellowship and academia.